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The Athenian Mercury.

Tuesday, *September* 17. 1695.

Queſt. 1. *IT being my fortune to live with a firſt Coſen, who is extreamly pleaſing to fancy, and by her outward deportment ſeems to be a very good Chriſtian, and ſo I take her to be, it being all the knowledge whereby we are able to Judge of any ones Integrity, ſeeing it is God only that can diſcern between the inward intentions of the Heart, and the outward Actions; but being my ſelf a very wicked youth, think that if I can compaſs to marry her by her pious examples and converſation, I may be brought to a convincement of, and contrition for my ſins, and ſo ſhe may prove an Inſtrument for the ſaving of my Soul.*

Now my earneſt requeſt to you in this caſe is, that (whether or no) it being in the Old Teſtament forbidden to marry ſecond Cozens, it may be lawful in the ſight of God for me to marry under circumſtances aforementioned, and according to your advice ſhall proſecute my deſign or let it alone,

And in the next place, whether it may be expedient, ſeeing many unhappy marriages do occur thereby, ſeveral whereof I can aſſert to. Pray your advice.

Anſw. In the forbidding of ſecond, firſt Coſens are doubtleſs included; As for your pretended deſign in it, if it were lawful, the marriage wou'd ſcarcely have that effect, for if her good advice and example can't influence you now, 'tis very unlikely it ſhou'd be more prevalent from a wife.

Queſt. 2. *I have heard a very pleaſant relation of the people called* Hottentots *in* Africa, *near the cape of good hope, particularly of their food, which is ſaid to be Guts uncleanſed, and raw fleſh: ſome have affirmed them to be half Man half Monkey, I deſire the favour of you to tell us, if there are ſuch a people, and what you know of their cuſtoms.*

Anſw. Without all diſpute there are ſuch a people, who we think may properly be called Men, tho ſomething brutiſh in their cuſtoms and manners; In Queen *Elizabeths* time there were two of 'em brought into *England*, by ſome Merchants who when they were upon their Coaſts, decoyed them into the ſhip and brought them away againſt their conſents; they were taken naked with ſome undreſſed Skins and Guts hanging upon them, and were forced to put on cloaths tho very unwillingly at firſt, yet kept them on very contentedly when they came into colder Climates; they were preſented to the Queen who ſeeing them very much diſatisfyed, cauſed them to have Rich Apparrel, to eat well, hear good Muſic, and have the beſt Entertainment they were capable of receiving; yet their love of their own Country was ſo great they cou'd never forget it, and one of 'em ſoon died, as was ſuppoſed, of grief; the other was retained about 5 or 6 years longer, and all poſſible endeavours uſed to make him learn our Language, and be better reconciled to our cuſtoms, but all to no purpoſe, for he either wou'd not or cou'd not, ever ſpeak one word, but was obſerv'd to take all the oppertunities he cou'd to bewail the loſs of his Country, as was underſtood by ſome who had been in thoſe parts, and was a little acquainted with their Geſtures and Tone of voice; upon which the Queen ordered him to be ſent back with the next Ships that took that Voyage, he went in the ſame fine Cloaths he had here, and as ſoon as ever he was ſet on ſhore he tore them off and ſtompt them under his feet, got on a paunch of Guts again, and went away rejoycing with ſome of his own Countrymen.

But we have yet a better account of the *Hottentots* then cou'd be diſcovered by theſe two; for which we are indebted to the *Hollanders* who have planted a Colony at the cape of good hope, and have very induſtriouſly acquainted themſelves with the manners and cuſtoms of that Nation. They tell, us the Country is wholly uncultivated a great way, and has but a ſmall number of Inhabitants, who are all cloathed with fat beaſts skins, their food is roots, the fat of Whales, fiſh half boiled, and very often fleſh quite raw. They have this conveniency, that their Dinner is always ready, for if they have a mind to eat, and have nothing elſe by them, they cut pieces of the skin which they wear and broil it upon the Coals, untill it is as hard as Sea Bisket, If they find hony at any time they eat wax and all, If they happen to be in a Dutch mans houſe when the pot is on the fire, they will drink down the ſcum boyling hot. Their drink is Water or Milk; when any one is ſick they make a ſort of a pottage, with Cabbage, white Wheat, Muſtard Leaves, and Pork all boiled togather. Their great Remedies are bleeding a vein in the back, applying a hot Iron to the Arm of the ſick perſon, then to waſh the wound with hot Milk which has had herbs boyled in it: With this ſort of Food, and with theſe remedies, they commonly live an hundred, or ſixſcore years. All the crafts known amongſt them, are the heating of Iron red hot, and beating, and pointing it betwixt two ſtones, (which ſerves them both for Anvil and Hammer) and faſtening it to the end of their Arrows. And that of making Matts of Ruſhes to cover their Cabins; And theſe were both taught them by the Dutch, for before they came into their Country, they knew nothing but how to feed their flocks, and defend themſelves againſt wild beaſts. Nevertheleſs, when there is any diſpute about their right, and what belongs to them, the *Hottentots*, urge very good reaſons in their own cauſe; An inſtance of which we may ſee in the anſwer which one of 'em, who was taken Priſoner by the *Dutch*, gave to ſome who preſſed him, to tell them the motives which induced his Nation to take Arms againſt them.

" Firſt, tell me ye Dutch men, replyed he in an-
" ger, what obliged you to cultivate our Lands
" and Sow your Corn in our paſturages? By what
" right came you to ſeaſe upon the inheritance of
" our fathers, a country which has belonged to us,
" time out of mind? And by vertue of what law
" can you forbid the feeding of Cattel in our own
" Lands, upon which we firſt permitted you to
" come, only to refreſh your ſelves as you paſſed
" by? And yet you diſpoſe of our goods like
" Lords, and every day encroach yet more upon
" what belongs to us, by forbidding us to ap-
" proach to ſuch or ſuch a place. What wou'd
" you ſay if we ſhou'd quarrel thus in your coun-
" try, wou'd you be contented to ſuffer it? There-
" fore you cannot juſtly blame us for what we
" do.

Theſe people puniſh Adultery very ſeverely, they cut the man almoſt to pieces with a whip, and then hang his wounded body upon a tree, and burn the woman alive. Simple theft they only correct with the blow of a ſtick, given by the head of their Nation to the criminal, in the ſight of all the people: But if any one is convicted of ſtealing by night, they make him faſt four and twenty hours, and the morrow tye him to a tree, and whip him on the back till his ſhoulders run down with blood, then they turn his face to the ſpectators, caſt melted pitch, or a kind of gum upon his neck and ſtomach, and this ſcalding liquor, where ever it touches fetches off the skin in an inſtant; and after having treated him thus harſhly, they untye him, permit him to breath a little, and give him ſome-

thing

thing to eat, but afterwards they again tye his feet and hands, and leave him three days without suffering him to taste any thing, and yet they think they do him a great favour if they quit him with this chastisement, and don't send him into exile. They are as severe against Murderers, especially if he who kills another, passes for a witty or learn'd person, is rich, or has any share in the Government; for they say that such persons are absolutely inexcusable, because they cou'd not be ignorant of their duty; they strangle them immediately and cast their bodies into the Sepulchre of those they have slain. Such as Murder in robbing, they pierce their knees, tying them up to their shoulders, and leave them to expire in those torments. But if the murderer is some poor ignorant fellow who has committed the crime in some transport of anger, or when his imagination was disturbed by some strong drink, they have respect to his ignorance and weakness, and quit him only for undergoing the whip, or confiscation of his cattle, or some other punishment which is less than death.

They acknowledge a kind of Soveraign being, to whom they give the name of *Humma*, who causes the rain to fall, the winds to blow, and gives heat and cold; But they don't think themselves obliged to render him any homage, because, say they, sometimes he almost drowns the world with rain, and sometimes dries and burns it up with heat, instead of keeping a due proportion. They seem however to give a sort of a worship to the New Moon, since they are observed to gather together in great numbers, when it begins to appear, and to pass the whole night in Singing, Dancing, Leaping, clapping their hands together, and in making an odd sort of a murmuring noise.

Quest. 3. *I observed t'other day in the* Temple, *that my Chamber shook very much at the instant (and a little in the Intervals) of discharging the great Guns in* Southwark: *Pray resolve me, whether 'tis the air (only) suddenly retorted against the opposite building, by the force of the powder; or does the violence of the Clap Cause an Emotion in the Earth by the means of any Concavity, or otherwise, or what else is it, hath such an Extraordinary effect so far off.*

Answ. 'Twas only the shock of the Air, of which a very notable instance happen'd some years since, when the Powder-Mills were blown up at *Hackny Marsh*, for the Windows of *Hackney* Church were broken by the violent emotion of the Air, which was so forcibly carryed against them that it produced the same effect, as the throwing of several Footballs wou'd have done, and 'twas observed it shook the very houses near the *Royal-Exchange*.

Quest. 4. *A young Gentleman, falling in Love with a Lady prosecuted his suit with that vigour, that in short time he gained his mistresses affection, and nothing being wanting to perfect their Joys, but* Hymens *bands, she takes her leave of her spark and goes into the Country to see what her friends would give her; he, while she was there, writ to her that he would not have her, unless her friends would make her worth so much as he named. She understanding this, told him again, that she thought her self deserving of as good as he with what she had of her own, and so the match was broke off, but since they have been parted she is come to town, and his old passion being call'd to mind, he has fell sick, and swounds very often, but yet in his greatest agony if they tell him they will send for her, he is revived: his friends were the occasion of his large demand, for 'tis thought he loves the Lady very well. Now Gentlemen, we desire to hear your opinion, whether love can have so great an influence upon him; as to make him swound, or whether he shamms it to gain his friends consent, they being averse, yet are willing to be determined by you.*

Answ. 'Tis very probable, Love may really cause these disorders, tho perhaps after such an unhandsom treatment, it may be as difficult to perswade his Mistress, as 'tis to perswade his friends of it.

Advertisements.

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